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Letter dated 18 May 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to refer to the letter from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations of 10 May 2016, which was circulated as a document of the General Assembly and of the Security Council (A/70/871-S/2016/434). The aforementioned document represents a clear example of disinformation and yet another attempt to discredit Ukraine as a responsible and reliable actor in the international arena.

Ukraine consistently stands for strengthening the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and pays very close attention to preventive measures to counter growing threats in the area of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear safety and security. Its national progress report to the 2016 Nuclear Security Summit, which was issued as an enclosure to my letter of 21 April 2016 (A/70/840-S/2016/367), contains an overview of the measures regarding the protection of nuclear and other radioactive material implemented at the national level in accordance with our obligations and in partnership with relevant international organizations and other stakeholders. According to the implementation reports regarding the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Ukraine is recognized as a State with a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol in force, and as a State in which all nuclear material remains for peaceful activities.

Despite the clear international security guarantees provided in writing in 1994 when Ukraine gave up its nuclear arsenal, the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine were explicitly breached and are still being violated by the Russian Federation. Even in such a daunting security situation, the Ukrainian leadership has unambiguously emphasized its lack of intention to develop a nuclear weapons programme.

At the same time, I cannot help but respond to one specific reference in the letter from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation, which mentions the "major source of instability threatening the entire Eurasian continent". This instability was created by the actions of the Russian Federation, which invaded,

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occupied and attempted to annex the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine), and which started, sustained and continues to wage a hybrid war against Ukraine in the Donbass region, including through the supply of heavy weapons, military equipment and regular troops, fighters and mercenaries and the sponsoring and financing of terrorist acts and terrorist organizations on the territory of Ukraine. In fact, the purposeful and persistent policy of the Russian Federation to create zones of instability in Eastern Europe has been a hallmark of Moscow's behaviour over the past 25 years. (One needs to recall, inter alia, the protracted conflicts in Transnistria (Moldova), Abkhazia and South Ossetia (Georgia).) Thus, it is the Moscow regime that undermines international peace and security in Eastern Europe and beyond.

It is worth noting that the Chernobyl disaster, which was also mentioned in the letter from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation, had occurred in "a once politically stable and developed State", and Ukraine has had to deal with the consequences of the accident ever since. It is very telling that, in the cases of both the Chernobyl disaster and the Russian aggression against Ukraine, the Moscow line has been strikingly similar: rejections, denials and outright lies in the face of clear and plain facts.

I would appreciate your kind assistance in having the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 97, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Volodymyr **Yelchenko**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative